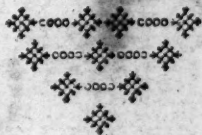


F A B L E S
M O R A L
A N D
S E N T I M E N T A L.
I N F A M I L I A R V E R S E.

By W. RUSSELL.



L O N D O N :

Printed for W. FLEXNEY, in *Holbourn*; and RICHARD-
SON and URQUHART, under the *Royal-Exchange*.

M D C C L X X I I .



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Fables are principally written upon subjects of universal concern; but which the Author supposed to have a more particular relation to the manners and sentiments of the present times.

In composing them, he did not rely merely upon his own genius; but adopted such Fables as he found to correspond with his ideas, and which he did not recollect to have seen in English verse, altering and adorning them to his purpose: and, when no such Fables occurred, he had recourse to invention. He has been attentive to the best models, but has imitated no particular writer. The Public will determine how far he has succeeded.

ii ADVERTISEMENT.

He has only further to add, that he has not only been careful in the choice of his subjects, but that the Fables were illustrated by the most natural and entertaining circumstances, and that the agents employed were of the most striking and agreeable kind. He has therefore seldom made use of vermin, or domestic animals. They are very unfriendly to Poetry. But, while he has endeavoured to avoid such creatures and things as are mean or disagreeable, he has taken care to make use of none whose properties are not generally understood.





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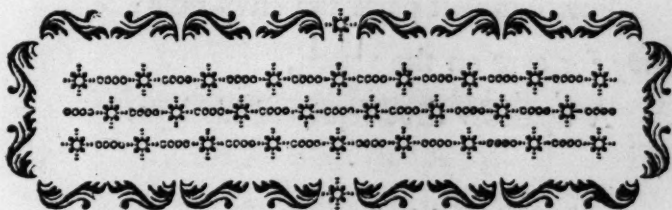
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F A B L E



F A B L E I.

The REDBREAST and the SPARROW.

The Author's Apology for writing.

A REDBREAST perch'd upon a thorn,
Which near a simple cottage stood,
Pour'd forth his artless notes one morn
With all the sweetness that he cou'd;

B

When,

When, warmly seated in the thatch,
 For humblest parts can envy raise;
 Envy for ever on the watch,
 A Sparrow thus reproved his lays:

- “ Hopest thou with thy autumnal note
 “ To emulate the birds of spring?—
 “ The Thrush, the Blackbird’s tuneful throat,
 “ That made the woods with music ring?
- “ Can thy weak warblings e’er compare
 “ With those fine trills that glad the sky;
 “ While, floating in the deep of air,
 “ The Lark unwinds his melody?—
- “ With hers, who in the lonely bow’r
 “ Relates the story of her pain;
 “ And, at the silent midnight hour,
 “ In many a sweetly varied strain,
 “ Pours

“ Pours out her sorrows to the gale—

“ The symphony of Philomel?”

“ More candour, Sir,”—the Robin said;

“ Nor think that from ambition flow

“ Those efforts, which are oft display’d

“ To welcome joy, or banish woe.

“ Of harmony warm is the love

“ The choristers of air among;

“ From that alone they often prove

“ The wildest labarinths of song.

“ The birds whose fame for ages past

“ Has flood, I reverence and admire;

“ I seek not their renown to blast,

“ Nor at their lofty strain aspire.

- “ Their songs delighted hill and dale,
 “ But now their throats are silent all;
 “ No voice soft-murmurs to the gale,
 “ No sprightly airs to Echo call!
- “ May I not then indulgence meet,
 “ ‘Tho’ I should merit little praise,
 “ Who these forsaken vallies greet,
 “ At least, with unaffected lays?”



F A B L E II.

The TULIP, the ROSE, and the BEE.

A MID the garden's finish'd pride,
 When every flow'r in beauty vied,
 A Tulip her fair breast display'd,
 And with a smile herself survey'd :
 Her polish'd neck, her blooming face,
 Her cheek, her mouth's enchanting grace,
 Of every Wasp allured the eye,
 And caught each roving Butterfly.
 Near this exulting flow'r was seen
 A virgin Rose, of modest mien :
 She seem'd afraid to meet the view,
 And little observation drew.
 But taste can see where sense is blind :
 A Bee upon her breast reclin'd ;
 And there in fragrance bathed would sip
 The nectar of her ruby lip.

The

The Tulip's heart with envy burn'd,
And in her soul the Bee she spurn'd.

- “ The garden round did he not wing ? —
“ And can he love that simple thing ?
“ Thank Heav'n, I need not envy — No ;
“ And jealousy I cannot know.
“ Who hears the lordly Wasp complain,
“ And Butterfly disclose his pain,
“ Can never languish for a Bee :
“ Yet it displeases one to see
“ An insect of reputed taste
“ On such a bud his fondness waste,
“ When flow'rs of beauty and condition
“ Perhaps had granted him permission —
“ At least, had not disdain'd to hear
“ His hum amusive strike their ear.”

The Bee, attentive all the while,
The Tulip answer'd with a smile.

“ That

“ That I should so much notice draw
 “ From one to beauty who gives law,
 “ Exceeds my hope : † therefore owe
 “ Your Ladyship an humble bow.
 “ But let not vain and empty pride
 “ The partner of my soul deride ;
 “ For know, not all the Tulip-race,
 “ Where beauty shifts from face to face,
 “ And in a thousand gaudy streaks
 “ Upon the sight like magic breaks ;
 “ Not these united could impart
 “ Such fine sensations to this heart
 “ As my sweet bud, whose leaves disclose
 “ What no external beauty knows.”



F A B L E III.

D E A T H *and* T I M E.

Addressed to a Friend.

W I T H due respect to that choice soul,
 Anacreon, patron of the bowl,
 To you, to Horace, and to others,
 All joyous bucks and social brothers,
 I wish that from your creed were lopt
 A tenet I could ne'er adopt;
 Because, believe my friendly word,
 To me it always seem'd absurd,
 To sage experience gave the lie,
 And clash'd with sound philosophy.

Forgive me then, if I suspect,
 When with fair Venus at your beck,
 And jolly Bacchus by your side,
 You bid the moments swiftly glide,

'Tis

'Tis not from thinking Death is nigh,
But from profound security.

In aid of what I here advance,
I say not "Let him shake his lance;"
But name the day, the month, the year,
When at his bar you must appear,
(Whether convinced that you shall go
To sing above or sigh below,
It matters not:) Is there on earth
A heart that could retain its mirth?



ONE night, in famed St. Giles's Street,
Death chanced his father Time to meet;
Who sternly thus his son addrest,
And from him tore his fable vest—
The sceptre too of high command,
And spear that glitter'd in his hand

C

" Ingrateful

“ Ingrateful prince! I’ll let you know
 “ To whom your rank and pow’r you owe.
 “ For what your sway did I decree,
 “ But that the world might reverence me?
 “ While you on Pleasure’s lap recline,
 “ Or with luxurious Comus dine,
 “ I am despis’d; day after day
 “ I find my consequence decay.
 “ Had you with judgement fill’d your post
 “ I ne’er the hearts of men had lost.”

“ I own, that with terrific mien,”
 Said Death, “ less seldom I am seen;
 “ Less fierce perhaps the fever’s rage,
 “ And famine seldom I engage;
 “ But I have agents in my pay
 “ That more securely work their way,
 “ And bring ten thousands to the grave
 “ Before their danger they perceive.
 “ The P—x, Consumption——”

“ Cease

“ Cease to name,”

Cried Time, “ th’ associates of your shame.

“ ’Tis not the numbers you destroy,

“ But ’tis the means that you employ

“ Must gain respect. Your shafts display

“ To all degrees, in open day;

“ And, as of old, in ev’ry clime,

“ The fons of earth will honour Time.”

“ My fire,” said Death, “ if I have err’d

“ (Most solemnly I can aver it)

“ It was from a mistaken zeal,

“ The source of which I will reveal.

“ *The more that mankind know of me*

“ *The less they seem to value thee.*

“ Be merry, my friends, for to-morrow we
die,

“ Cheat Time, and cheat Care is of wretches
the cry:

“ Hark! now with the hollow the roofs all
rebound,

“ And thought and reflection are lost in the
sound.”

S O N G [supposed to be sung by the
leader of a gang of Highwaymen.]

“ We’ve escaped on the road, come, my lads,
let’s be gay ;

“ An off’ring to Bacchus and Venus I’ll pay.

“ My arms around Cloe while thus I entwine,

“ And drain from this glass the rich juice of
the vine,

“ I scorn all the dangers from robbing that
spring ;

“ Nor would I repine tho’ at morn I should
swing.

“ Come,

" Come, my lads, in a bumper let's drown
the dog Time;

" For now to be sober were surely a crime.

" If Death should appear, I would call him
an afs;

" But he dares not shew face to a girl and a
glafs.

" If Death should appear, I would call him
an afs;

" But he dares not shew face to a girl and a
glafs."

" The frantic notes," said Time, " I hear,
" And know they are ally'd to fear;
" An effort weak to chase that dread
" Which you more strongly should have shed,
" Or a delirium of a mind
" To ev'ry fix'd idea blind.
" Did they believe the words they sing
" Your presence no concern would bring.

" Go

“ Go then, and with a slender thread
 “ A sword suspend o’er ev’ry head.
 “ If still to me they shew contempt,
 “ My son from blame shall stand exempt.”

The order Death obey’d with speed,
 And Time beheld his scheme succeed.
 To him with knocking knees they pray,
 With sighs and tears implore his stay;
 And call on ev’ry Pow’r above
 In attestation of their love.

The Prince acknowledged his mistake,
 And promis’d human hearts to shake:
 But still in some sequester’d hour,
 Seduced by Vice his paramour,
 He sily stabs. Hence we, poor elves!
 Think all men mortal but ourselves;
 And laugh, and dance the time away,
 While on the brink of fate we play.

F A B L E

F A B L E IV.

The OLD LION.

To a discarded Officer.

K NOW, Belifarius, when thy story
 Distressful rushes on my mind,
 I scarcely mourn thy faded glory,
 I little fault with fortune find.

Great souls can with contempt look down
 Upon the pageantry of state,
 Upon the splendor of a crown,
 However low their own estate.

But when I think upon the scorn
 The stabs thy gen'rous breast must feel
 From fools, from slaves ignobly born —
 Oh, it might melt a heart of steel !

Yet

Yet sharper, keener still the smart
 Which from insulting friendship springs :
 Ah shun with care the poison'd dart,
 That burns and festers as it stings !



A L I O N bold, who oft had led
 The beasts to fight, and nobly bled,
 Oppress'd with years, and clad with scars,
 Was deem'd unfit for future wars ;
 And by the minions of the court
 Was left neglected of support.
 But, tho' deprived of rank and pow'r,
 He hoped to find a tranquil hour,
 And quietly at least expire ;
 When forth the Boar rush'd in his ire,
 And smote him with vindictive tooth,
 For some pretended slight in youth.

The

The Bull came next, with pointed horn,
And swore his swaggering he had borne ;
That every dog had but his day :
This was the season to repay.
The Lion's patience all endured ;
For he had been to wounds inured.

“ If he is come to such a pass,
“ I'll have a kick too,” said the ass.

When this the hoary chieftain saw,
That heart which gave the forest law
Within him sunk — he call'd on fate
His ills at once to terminate.

“ Shall I bear this, yet draw my breath ? —
“ O come and aid me, friendly death ! ”

Yet pride still yielded some relief
Amid his agonizing grief.

But when a cub of noble race,
A Pard, who fill'd the Lion's place ;
Whom oft his generous board had fed,
And whom to danger he had bred,
Appear'd among the barbarous tribe,
What language can his heart describe ? —

“ I meant to have implored your aid,”
Insultingly the Leopard said ;
“ But find you are become the jest
“ Of every Afs, and vulgar beast.”

The Lion roll'd his fable eyes,
And strove, but strove in vain, to rise ;
Like Cæsar, “ This from thee ! ” — he cry'd,
And in a pang of sorrow dy'd.



F A B L E V.

The COUNTRY-MAID and the MILK-PAIL.

A Country-maid to market going
 With Milking-pail, both large and flowing,
 Like most young women, while unmarried,
 Was by imagination carry'd.

- “ This milk,” she said, “ if wisely fold,
 “ Will buy a hundred eggs, I’m told ;
 “ I have three hens those eggs to hatch,
 “ And will their motions strictly watch.
 “ Allowing for what *haps* we call,
 “ For addle eggs, dead chicks, and all,
 “ I shall, at least, rear sixty birds —
 “ Yes, sixty” — and she conn’d her words.
 “ Thirty at Christmas I will sell,
 “ And thirty keep till Easter — well !
 “ Chickens, at Christmas, bear a *price*,
 “ And pullets are, at Easter, nice.

- “ The thirty fold a pig will buy —
 “ What do I mean ? — a pig — O fy !
 “ No ; it a lovely calf shall be : —
 “ But there again — come, let me see ;
 “ Shall I prefer a cow or bull ? —
 “ A bullock is as well to the full.
 “ The stately beast, when two months old,
 “ To any butcher may be fold ;
 “ And veal of such an age will bring
 “ A pretty penny — in the spring.
 “ My pullets next I’ll send to town ;
 “ And then I’ll buy — so sweet a gown !
 “ A hat, a cap, and ribbands fine —
 “ O how on May-day I shall shine ! —
 “ Yet after all, upon reflection,
 “ I have not suited my complexion.
 “ O lud ! the colour — what a creature !
 “ Was ever such a fool in nature !
 “ Shall I have yellow, green, or red ? —
 “ That tawdry yellow is so dead —
 “ The

“ The green is so much like the plain,
 “ That one might romp — without a stain ;
 “ But red I know becomes me best,
 “ And soon in red I shall be drest.
 “ Tom, Dick, and Harry will admire,
 “ And say I set their hearts on fire ;
 “ But I will pass them with disdain :
 “ I yet a London toast may reign.
 “ Why not ? — A maiden from the green,
 “ They tell us, has been made a queen.”

In thought, a lady drest in silk,
 She grew regardless of her milk ;
 A queen, in state she seem'd to sail,
 And from her head she toss'd the pail.
 The eggs, the chickens, calf, and gown,
 All vanish'd with — the faithless crown ;
 And naught, alas ! was left poor Dolly,
 But sorrow for her pride and folly.

FABLE VI.

VICE *and* FORTUNE.

Fortune and Vice, 'tis said, one day
 Encounter'd on the public way,
 That to a spacious city led,
 Suppose it London, if you chuse;
 And, as they both are courtly bred,
 They must civilities exchange,
 And name St. James's and the 'Change,
 And consequently ask the news.

The

The progress of their conversation
 The listener never would relate;
 But said, with looks denouncing fate,
 That it regarded much the nation,
 The welfare of the church and state,
 And many a lady's reputation.

In terror therefore some suppose
 A combination of our foes;
 That Rome, in league with France and Spain,
 Has form'd a scheme to rule the main,
 And keeps our ministry in hire
 To set our naval stores on fire:
 As witness that tremendous shock
 We lately felt at Portsmouth dock.
 Others believe a certain faction
 Were guilty of this horrid faction;
 That liberty they only roar
 To open wide rebellion's door,

Make

Make Wilkes the ruler of the nation,
 And work another *reformation*—
 A reformation strange and new,
 When parsons shall be clad in blue,
 And when the chief's Essay on Woman
 Shall be the Book of Service Common.

There are who think the whole was scandal;
 Bold hints of what at court had pass'd;
 Anecdotes of a late mask'd ball,
 And who was rook'd at Arthur's last:
 At Jonathan's of doings dark,
 And assignations in the park.

But whate'er way it came about,
 'Tis certain that the fiends fell out;
 And, like court-ladies in such case,
 Began to talk of rank and place.
 Fortune, still forward and assuming,
 Told Vice she thought her too presuming;

And

And hoped, as she had been in France,
That she would know to keep her distance.

“ Is it not I,”— she said,—“ who raise

“ To regal state the humble clown?—

“ And I who in the dust debase

“ The head encircled with a crown?—

“ A joy, a grief can mortals feel,

“ Which they to Fortune do not owe?—

“ I shed the plume, I point the steel,

“ I mark th’ extremes of bliss and woe.”

“ Your reign’s extensive, I agree,”—
Said Vice;—“ yet you must yield to me.

“ On man thy choicest blessings show’r;

“ Upon his board, upon his bed;

“ Exalt a slave to sov’ reign pow’r,

“ And let him be with flattery fed:

“ I can twist serpents round the bowl,

“ Can on the couch transfix his soul—

- “ Amid his minions make him groan,
“ And start, and tremble on a throne.

“ The greatest monarch thou canst rob
“ Of crown and sceptre at a blow;
“ But think not with the senseless mob
“ That thou canst make him wretched—No!
“ To Vice alone that province fell
“ Of all the instruments of hell.”



F A B L E VII.

The WOLF and the DOG.

To LIBERTY.

O Liberty! how dear art thou
To those whom bondage never broke!
Whom pow'r ne'er taught the knee to bow,
Who never bore the servile yoke!

Who could persuade the Indian chief
To leave for courts his sylvan walks?
We call him *savage, robber, thief*;
But he another language talks.

Yet custom, that makes all things easy,
 Of bondage can remove the pain :
 Yes, Romans ! it made slavery please ye ;
 And may make Britons hug the chain.



A WOLF, who long had ranged the wood,
 And long the heath in vain for food,
 Reduced at length to skin and bone,
 Sat down his wretched fate to moan.

“ Shall Man,” he said, “ shall lawless Man,
 “ Ufurp upon great Nature’s plan ?
 “ Shall he, who shares the fertile plain,
 “ Deny to Wolves the woodland reign ? —
 “ Ill-fated race ! — he bears the sway,
 “ And his fell Dogs devour our prey.
 “ What shall we do ? — No ties can bind,
 “ No pity soothe his savage mind :

“ Man

“ Man falls a prey to Man his brother ;
 “ But Wolves, though fainting, — spare each
 other.”

As thus he mourn'd, a Dog came by,
 And proudly ask'd the reason why,
 With all that smugliness of face
 That speaks a courtier warm in place.

“ Time,” thought the Wolf, nor mask'd
 his look,
 “ Has been when this I would not brook ;
 “ But prudence bids me now delay
 “ The combat till a future day.”

He therefore shifted, with a sneer,
 What greatest minds, at times, must bear ;
 And gave the air of compliment
 To what had no such kind intent.

“ My

“ My griefs regard myself alone,
 “ And better are, of course, unknown ;
 “ But you, Sir, look so sleek and fair,
 “ That Wolves might wish your lot to share.”

“ Blame, Sir, yourself,” the Dog reply’d,
 “ If that wish is not gratify’d :
 “ Forego the woods, to man submit ;
 “ To serve him you are highly fit.
 “ Oft have I wonder’d that a beast
 “ Of such rare qualities possessest,
 “ Should live in hunger, cold, and fear,
 “ And not to terms incline his ear.
 “ By this eternal opposition
 “ You ne’er will better your condition ;
 “ But, if you ’scape the meagre fiend
 “ That now seems to announce your end,
 “ Will, by your friends deserted, fall
 “ A common sacrifice for all.

“ Make

“ Make me your patron, and you’ll find

“ That man is not to merit blind.”

“ But,” — said the Wolf, “ since I must
owe

“ To you my fortune, let me know

“ How you’re employ’d ?” — “ O scarce at
all !” —

Exclaim’d the Dog — “ Our task is small.

“ To keep the house from robbers free,

“ Is all that is desired of me ;

“ While some the Hare and Stag pursue,

“ And others combat such as you.

“ But flattery is our chief employment,

“ And source of our supreme enjoyment :

“ By that, without the need of craving,

“ What presents are we still receiving !

“ Receiving from a master’s hand —”

“ That flattery I don’t understand,”

Replied

Replied the Wolf : but, hunger pinching,
 He was upon the point of clinching ;
 When looking at the Dog with care,
 He saw his neck had lost some hair ;
 And said, “ My friend, what mark is this ? ” —
 “ Pshaw, nothing, nothing ! — naught amiss. ” —
 “ Nothing ! ” — “ Mere nothing, on my
 word. ” —

“ Nay, now you rather grow absurd. ” —
 “ Why, faith, you are so eagle-eyed,
 “ That you perhaps the place have spied
 “ The collar binds, to fix my chain. ” —
 “ Chain ! ” — said the Wolf, and eyed the
 plain ;

“ You have not then, I find, your freedom —
 “ At will to go, at will to come. ” —
 The Dog replied, “ Not always so ;
 “ But what of that ? ” — and cried, “ Pho,
 pho ! ”

Yet

Yet his declining head betray'd
The cause that he desired to aid.

“ To you a trifle it may seem,”
The Wolf return'd ; “ but I esteem
“ My freedom at so high a rate,
“ No bribe could make me share your fate.
“ No !—rather on the mountains bleak
“ Let me beneath the cold still shake,
“ Than live in state, — if I must part
“ With what is dearer than my heart.
“ Shall it for food then be resign'd ?” —
He said — and left the winds behind.



FABLE VIII.

The ROSE and the ZEPHYR.

To a Libertine.

IN vain you rakes and pretty fellows,
 With conscious looks, pretend to tell us,
 That "every woman may be won,"
 And "every maid may be undone;"
 For these are truths yet undisputed,
 And consequently unconfuted.
 You only say, in language common,
 That "every woman is a woman"—
 A being form'd with human passions,
 With appetites and inclinations;
 And, *ergo*, she a man may love,
 And he a faithless one may prove.

I at

I at such frothy nonsense smile,
 And scorn the creatures to revile.
 But when from Pope your text you take,
 That "*woman is in heart a rake*:"
 " And only wants an opportunity,
 " And decent share of importunity,
 " To gratify her inclination,
 " Unbounded, with the male creation ;"
 The sex's champion I advance,
 And brandish my aërial lance—
 A tuck that stabs without annoying,
 And wounds the heart without destroying.



YOUNG Phoebus, in the sylvan shade,
 A Rose-bud sweet one morn survey'd:
 Its leaves so fresh, and lively hue,
 The prince's admiration drew.

“ What pity that so fair a flow’r,”
 He said, “ should deck a shepherd’s bow’r!
 “ Or in the wild that fragrance waste
 “ Which might have made a monarch blest!—
 “ Those beauties in a court should shine,
 “ Or grace some god’s immortal shrine.”

The Rose-bud heard this declamation
 Without one look of approbation.
 The prince now in his splendor shone,
 And seem’d to eye the Rose alone.
 In vain—it could not pierce the grove,
 A veil by chaste Diana wove;
 Hedged round by verdant innocence,
 By sweet content, and competence:
 And hence the lustre of his rays
 Was ineffectual as his praise.

Stern Boreas next the Rose-bud view’d,
 And thus advanced with purpose rude.

No

No rake knew better his vocation,
And none could wish more apt occasion.

“ That youth has justly met your scorn.
“ Though flowing locks his head adorn,
“ Observe his chin—the blooming face
“ I need not say wants manly grace:”—
And still, ’twixt ev’ry word he spoke,
He gave his bristly beard a stroke.
Now, to make known his hoary strength,
He made the Pine display its length;
Then by the top he took the Oak,
Which bravely by the middle broke.
The forest trembled at his voice,
And distant woods shook with the noise.

Her leaves the Rose more closely shut,
And to his shifts the soldier put.
Now to his ardour she would bend,
And then, as quickly would ascend;

Nor

Nor ever one sweet odour lent,
 For all the passion he had spent.
 At last, with urging, fretting fired,
 He in a whirlwind-rage retired.

The wittings will perhaps suppose
 Some fair insensible our Rose;
 A flowret that could neither prove
 The sorrows nor the joys of love.
 But there, by an attempt at wit,
 The biters will be fairly bit.

A gentle Zephyr softly came,
 And to the Rose-bud breathed his flame.
 She listens to his tender sighs,
 To him her virgin zone unties,
 Admits him fondly to her breast,
 And in her Zephyr's arms is blest.
 He taught her love; for him alone
 Her heart a wish has ever known.

F A B L E

F A B L E IX.

The E C L I P S E.

AMbition join'd with jealousy
Hurl'd Satan headlong from the sky;
And others of etherial race
Have merited a-like disgrace.
By an ungenerous thirst of fame,
Thus fools their infamy proclaim.



THRONED on the radiant car of day,
Attended by the smiling Hours,
Young Phoebus hail'd the blooming May,
'The brightest of coelestial pow'rs!

Earth

Earth felt th' influence of his beams :

With flow'rs the fields and meadows glow ;
His glory twinkles in the streams,
And floods and seas his splendor shew.

Ne'er saw creation such a sight
Since Nature left the womb of Night.
The universe was like a bride
Adorn'd to grace her lover's side ;
And ev'ry creature seem'd to gaze
In admiration and amaze.

“ It shall not be ! ” — fair Cynthia cried —
“ His rays shall not my lustre hide.
“ He the sole monarch of the sky ? —
“ Rather than bear it let me die.
“ His empty pride he soon shall mourn,
“ While I refulgent shed the morn.

“ Yes !

“ Yes! I will shade his beams so bright,
 “ That all may know the Queen of Night—
 “ The Queen of Night!—what do I say?
 “ I too shall be the Queen of Day.”

Methinks that Fancy, in a glow,
 Anticipates the grand debate;
 While Curiosity, on tip-toe,
 Demands—what I shall soon relate.

Cynthia now fought her brother Phoebus;
 From such fell passions Virtue save us!—
 She met him too in that broad pathway
 ’Twixt heaven and earth which lies, they say;
 And there, through envy, strove to hide
 That brightness whence she is supplied.
 But, though her rage obscured his rays,
 She could not emulate his blaze:
 Dark as a patch on beauty’s face,
 She but proclaim’d her own disgrace.

Hence we are taught, that Cynthia borrows
 The lustre which she sets before us;
 And, what is worse, from Phoebus' throne
 The bounty she derives alone.



F A B L E X.

The VICTIM.

To a Country Girl.

“ **P** Ray, Sall, what mean those filks and
rings,

“ Those bracelets, and a thousand things,

“ With which a country lass, like you,

“ Methinks should nothing have to do?”

“ Believe me, on my honest word,

“ They were a present from my Lord—

“ He must not yet indeed be named,

“ But of his kindness I’m ashamed.

“ I long to know what he’ll propose;

“ For what he means heaven only knows.

“ But surely it is naught amiss;
 “ Since he ne’er once desired a kiss,
 “ And scarcely ever touch’d my hand:
 “ So all I hope will sweetly end.”—
 “ End!—can you doubt of his intentions?”—
 “ I have indeed some apprehensions;
 “ But ’tis not the first country girl
 “ That has been marry’d to an earl.”

“ Alas! it grieves me much to find
 “ Such madness, Sally, fill your mind:
 “ But pride seduced your sex at first,
 “ And all are with the folly curs’d,
 “ Till once repentance opes their eyes,
 “ And yields them up to tears and sighs.”



A HEIFER, pride of all the drove,
 Was singled as a feast for Jove;

So

So fair a victim ne'er had trod
The threshold of the thundering god.
A wreath of flow'rs her front adorns,
Gay gems and ribbands grace her horns;
Before her flutes and trumpets play,
And crowds escort her on her way.

“ What can this ceremony mean?”—
She said—“ it might become a queen.
“ Right well do these attendants know
“ To whom they so much honour shew.
“ I'm doubtless chosen for my charms
“ To fill some wealthy monarch's arms.”—
Some mighty Bull perhaps she meant
Who ruled a fertile continent.

But when the temple's awful gate
She enter'd, how was she elate!—
The sacred fire, the lofty dome,
The glittering shrine, the sweet perfume!
“ A king!”—

- “ A king ! ” — she cried — “ I scorn such love ;
 “ And hope to be the wife of Jove.
 “ Another Io —— ha ! — no more ? —
 “ Since Io’s charms to mine were poor.
 “ What multitudes around I see
 “ To hail the new divinity ! —
 “ By Stix I swear, my friends shall find
 “ A goddess as their wishes kind.

As this she spoke, a vagrant fly
 Regardless flutter’d in her eye.

- “ Hence, creature vile ! ” — the Heifer said,
 “ How darest thou thus my sight invade ? —
 “ A thing like thee with its proboscis
 “ To sully my apotheosis ! ” —

- “ Less pride ! ” — replied the flighted insect ;
 “ I know where I should pay respect.

“ Soon

“ Soon will you tumble from the skies,

“ To be the food of vulgar flies.

“ I hope there are some more to come;

“ For oft we have a hecatomb.

“ Shall you be sacrificed alone?”—

The Heifer reel'd, and gave a groan;

The sacred axe her vision ended,

And Io to the earth descended.



F A B L E XI.

The TWO LIZARDS.

O Ye, who live in humble state !
 Your welfare did ye rightly know,
 Ye would not labour to be great,
 Ye would despise the purple's glow.

But oft your simple hearts are caught,
 Alas ! with rank's deceitful glare ;
 Your own condition's held at naught,
 And greatness is your foolish pray'r.



BENEATH the south side of a bank,
 Two Lizards basking in the sun,
 One was disposed his God to thank,
 One wish'd his life had ne'er begun.

“ What

“ What can a Lizard more desire
 “ Than food adapted to his taste ? —
 “ To live in ease, in peace expire ? —
 “ Beneath the reach of Fortune placed.”

“ Yes, we exist !” —the other cried,
 “ And that is all that we can boast ;
 “ To us distinction is denied,
 “ Amid the wide creation lost.

“ O curs’d obscurity ! — unseen
 “ Through life to glide ! — unknown to die !
 “ That stately Stag if I had been,
 “ I might have caught a monarch’s eye.”

As this he spoke, the hounds he view’d,
 And heard the woods with clarions ring ;
 He saw the Stag to death pursued,
 And ’mid the train appear’d the king.

The wiser Lizard said, " My friend,
 " I hope your murmurs are suppress'd,
 " Since you behold the hapless end
 " Of him whose lot engaged your breast.

" With pious gratitude to heaven
 " Let this event your soul inspire ;
 " Enjoy what it has kindly given,
 " Nor vainly covet to be higher.

" If ours is not the pride of rank,
 " We have what grandeur cannot give ;
 " We safely dwell beneath this bank,
 " And happy, though obscurely, live."



F A B L E XII.

The Boy and the BUTTERFLY.

A Sprightly Boy, one summer's day,
 Perceived a Butterfly so gay,
 That all his wishes it engross'd :
 To each surrounding object lost.
 His left his fellows, and pursued,
 With sparkling eyes, the favourite good.

Now on the Rose it seem'd to rest,
 And now to court the Violet's breast ;
 From flow'r to flow'r incessant flying,
 Inviting still, and still denying.
 Beneath his hand, beneath his hat,
 He often thought he had it pat ;
 The Violet-bed, the Myrtle-sprig,
 Had made his little heart grow big.

At last, with joy he saw it venture
 Within a Tulip's bell to enter,
 And *snatch'd* it with ecstatic rapture.
 But what, alas ! was all his capture ?
 A lifeless insect, like a worm,
 Without one grace in all its form !—
 With rage and disappointment stung,
 The reptile to the earth he flung ;
 Yet fond remembrance fill'd his eye
 With tears, and passion heaved a sigh.
 Reason inform'd the creature's breast,
 And thus the mourner it address :

“ I am deceitful Pleasure's shade ;
 “ A Butterfly with joy surveyed
 “ By every inexperienced child,
 “ Till he, like you, has been beguiled.
 “ Learn, therefore, that this insect bright,
 “ The worm alluring to the sight ;

“ This

“ This airy trifter, ever smiling,
“ Still promising, and still beguiling ;
“ All glorious, when at distance view'd,
“ And always pleasing while pursued,
“ Will never yield what you desire ;
“ And, grasp'd with ardour, will expire.”



F A B L E XIII.

The I V Y and the V I N E.

ONCE in a certain sylvan nation,
 That is to say, a forest wide,
 An Ivy who gave law to fashion,
 And whom an Oak had made his bride—
 Who flaunted in each public place,
 Like lady in brocade and lace,
 Began a Vine thus to deride.

The season you must know was Spring,
 When all the wing'd musicians sing
 Their notes, as sweet—nay, sweeter far,
 Than flute, than hautboy, or guitar.

But

But March is known to storm and frown,
 And April suns oft set in tears;
 The frugal Vine had therefore fears,
 And had not bought her summer's gown.

Had she been dress'd, the haughty Ivy
 Had pass'd in envious silence by,
 Or whisper'd in a sister's ear,
 But yet so loud as all might hear,
 " If thus the help-mate of a squire
 " Will splendidly herself attire,
 " His branches must fall off apace.
 " Perhaps indeed the princely Pine—
 " The creature does not want a face—
 " May be attracted by her shine;
 " Her husband may obtain a place,
 " Like others, by his wife's disgrace;
 " And e'en, O shame! at Sylva's helm
 " We may behold the booby Elm."

But,

But, as the Vine was very plain,
 The Ivy touch'd another string;
 For Scorn, to gratify her vein,
 A charge from either side can bring.

“ How some folks will make known their
 “ birth !

“ The Elm that raised a Vine from earth
 “ Expected surely to be paid
 “ With foliage for support and shade.
 “ No wonder husbands go astray,
 “ If wives their nakedne's betray;
 “ Or dress in such a homely guise
 “ As trees of figure must despise.
 “ Pray, Madam, for your husband's sake,
 “ From others an example take:
 “ Wide as the Oak's his spreading arms;
 “ But who is careless of her charms?—
 “ You, milk-maid like, still seem to pay
 “ Your homage to the first of May;
 “ Then

" Then, for a while, indeed you flaunt it,
 " And dress resign, when most you want it.
 " Why not through all the circling year
 " In equal finery appear?—
 " At every season I am seen
 " In all the splendour of a queen.

" By this attention to my beauty,
 " I tie my husband to his duty:
 " My green allurements bind him fast,
 " And in my arms he'll breathe his last;
 " While you, and others who neglect
 " To pay this tribute of respect,
 " May yet your prudent folly weep,
 " As on the ground again you creep."

" My birth," replied th' indignant Vine,
 " At least is less obscure than thine.
 " An orphan void of all relief,
 " I own I was a prey to grief,

I

" Till

- “ Till raised by an indulgent swain
- “ Above the level of the plain.
- “ The generous Elm proposed his side,
- “ And I was made his lawful bride.
- “ But you, a plant both mean and base,
- “ Bribe Fortune with a lewd embrace.
- “ Once when the Oak with dew was drunk
- “ You twin'd around his aged trunk;
- “ And, though your breath he must detest,
- “ He ne'er could shake you from his breast.
- “ But I relate these facts in vain,
- “ Your rise is in your conduct plain.
- “ Like all whom Vice exalts to pow'r,
- “ You are resolved to live your hour;
- “ And in superfluous trappings waste
- “ Your husband's substance, without taste:
- “ For ever draining from the root
- “ To feed your top's luxuriant shoot,
- “ While in your poisonous embrace
- “ The venerable tree decays;

“ As

" As now his sapless branches know,
 " And soon his leafless head will shew.
 " Then you will blame your folly past,
 " When keen you feel the northern blast:
 " But how, alas! how will you mourn
 " When from his seat the Oak is torn,
 " And on the earth exposed you lie,
 " Unpitied and alone to die!—

" My benefactor I repay
 " With chaste endearments every day;
 " For him my fragrant blossoms blow,
 " For him my grapes nectareous glow.
 " Not always gaudy I am seen,
 " But I am always sweet and clean:
 " Unvaried finery soon cloy,
 " And wanton fondness love destroys.
 " When my dear Elm is dressed I'm gay;
 " With him, my robes aside I lay.

- “ Why should I spend in idle shew
 “ What to a generous spouse I owe?—
 “ Thus loving and beloved we live,
 “ Regarding each what each can give;
 “ Still happy by each other’s side:
 “ Nor shall e’en death our hearts divide.
 “ In age lamented we will fall,
 “ Admired, esteem’d, revered by all;
 “ And long the story of our loves
 “ Will be related in the groves.”



F A B L E XIV.

The MATRIMONIAL SECRET.

TO LAURA.

YOU ask me, Laura, by what art
 You may preserve a husband's heart ;
 If you should find a gentle youth
 Possess'd of virtue and of truth —
 Of sentiment, and all the rest,
 Whose tender vows incline your breast.

But, Laura, think what you propose ;
 This question, know, is one of those
 The wits could never yet untie,
 That baffles all philosophy.

How

How then, alas ! shall I unwind
 This latent mystery of the mind ;
 That nameless something in each action,
 Which can, by a divine attraction,
 The bosom draw to its embrace ;
 That soft, that sweet, that magic grace,
 Which sheds affection, like a charm,
 And keeps desire for ever warm ?

But I can Laura naught refuse,
 For her I will invoke the Muse ;
 Then, if the spell I can't discover,
 Obedience will protect the lover.

The learn'd my forward zeal may blame,
 And brand the rash attempt with shame ;
 But knew they whence it took its rise,
 Could they behold my Laura's eyes,
 They for a smile would barter fame.

Hence,

Hence, ye profane ! while I relate
 The mysteries of the holy state ;
 And ye insensibles, who sleep
 In apathy — your distance keep !
 While I to Laura's heart reveal
 What your dead bosoms cannot feel.

Should then my peerless maid agree
 To pledge her vows to Heaven and me ;
 Or with some youth more favour'd blend
 The names of lover and of friend
 In one sweet word — each rising day
 Let her to Taste an offering pay ;
 Each night, ere she retire to rest,
 Let delicacy bind her breast,
 And let the nymph Simplicity
 Surround her waist with modesty.

'Tis Taste bestows on every art
 The charm that captivates the heart ;

Which

Which no acquaintance can destroy,
Which still can please, and never cloy :
'Tis she distils the fragrant dew
That keeps the joys of lovers new,
And she must shed her fine perfume,
Or Hymen's bliss will lose its bloom.

'Tis not enough a wife attend
To all the duties of her station,
And be a good domestic friend ;
A thousand graces she must blend
With every grant or obligation,
If she would keep alive the fire
Of sentiment and soft desire.

A maxim glean'd from common life
Does more this Secret to disclose,
Than all our writers, verse and prose :
Lose not the mistress in the wife—
Remember by what means you rose.

A hus-

A husband's heart can be retain'd,
By that alone which it was gain'd.

Recal the hours of expectation,
When hope its gay enchantment shed,
And, warm'd with love, imagination
Keen glanced upon the marriage bed :

Reflect what then became you best ;
Nor be your care to dress confined,
Include the ornaments of mind
Which most engaged your lover's taste ;
With those again yourself invest,
And still your husband's heart you'll bind.

But sweeter to the human sense
Than all the arguments of reason
Example's gentle influence ;
I'll therefore tell a tale in season.

IN Cyprus lived a lovely nymph,
And Psyche was her name :

One morning, as she took the air,
She met the Paphian dame,

Fair Venus, with her little son —
No more upon her knee —

The boy now towards manhood rose,
And comely was to see.

The virgin felt young Cupid's pow'r,
But maidens must not tell ;

She in her breast conceal'd the dart,
And bade the world farewell,

Oft had she walk'd th' Idalian green,
And oft the myrtle grove,

But ne'er could one kind glance obtain ;
Blind was the God of Love.

Ah,

Ah, solitude but nursed the ill
 Which it was meant to cure !—
 She pin'd, like an impoison'd bud,
 And life could scarce endure.

One day, as pensively she mused,
 She met the goddess Taste ;
 Who put a mirror in her hand,
 A zone about her waist.

Lo, earth with fresher verdure smiles !
 The skies more bright appear !—
 Unnoticed beauties glad her eye,
 New sounds delight her ear !

“ Dress'd by this glass,” the goddess said,
 “ Your charms will fairer shine ;
 “ And while that girdle binds your waist,
 “ No lover will repine.

“ The roving youth whom you admire,

“ Whom Venus cannot keep,

“ Will sink enamour'd in your arms,

“ And on your breast will sleep.

“ But should you chance to break the glass,

“ Or lose the magic zone,

“ You will be left your case to weep,

“ And worse than now to moan.

“ The little wanton, be assured,

“ Who rules both earth and sky,

“ Has wings ; and, if my gifts you slight,

“ Will ~~use~~ those wings to fly.”

To Paphos Psyche hied with speed,

Array'd in graces new ;

And Hymen in his saffron robe

Soon told her all was true.

Days,

Days, weeks, and months, pass'd circling on
 In still increasing joy ;
 Possession seem'd but to inflame
 The laughter-loving boy.

If Psyche wander'd to the groves,
 Where love-taught warblers sing,
 Gay Cupid frolic'd in her walk,
 And cull'd the sweets of Spring.

If, to allay the Summer's heat,
 She fought the lucid wave,
 His image floated in the tide,
 Her lovely limbs to lave.

One evening warm'd with country sports,
 With rompings rather free,
 She loosed the girdle from her waist,
 And threw it in the sea.

“_What

“ What now avails that thing,” she said,

“ Since Cupid is my own?—

“ Why should a zone confine this breast,

“ Which beats for him alone?”—

But soon her Cupid’s alter’d looks

His alter’d heart display’d ;

She found herself, like many wives,

By wantonnefs betray’d.

No longer with enraptured gaze

Upon her face he hung ;

No longer with enchanted ear

He listen’d to her tongue.

In vain she at her toilette fits,

The mirror smiles in vain :

The aid of drefs will ne’er restore

What drefs could not retain.

But

But wives who delicacy lose
 Grow careless oft of dress ;
 One morning in a pet she rose,
 And broke the faithful glass.

Polite indifference now took place
 Of transport and delight ;
 Each day she less engaging grew,
 More cloying every night.

At length, quite sicken'd with disgust,
 His pinions Cupid spread,
 And left his once loved fair to bathe
 With tears her widow'd bed.



F A B L E XV.

HOPE *and* FOREKNOWLEDGE.

WHEN rash Prometheus form'd his man,
 'Tis said he had no settled plan ;
 But by selection and rejection
 The work brought to its now perfection.
 A hint Experience never lent
 Which she had reason to repent :
 He to her precepts all attended,
 And now retrench'd, and now amended ;
 Nor, like vain coxcomb, took offence
 At thought of wounded consequence.

'Tis thus the Grecians tell the story :
 A humbling blow to human glory.
 Of brute materials, round that lay,
 The artist took the finest clay ;

And

And in the human frame combin'd
 The virtues of each several kind ;
 Then from the shrine of Jove he stole
 That animating spark the soul.

Thus furnish'd, man at rising fun
 Walk'd forth the race of life to run.
 He could not brave the Lion's force,
 Nor match the swiftness of the Horse ;
 But he could rein the courser's speed,
 And make the savage monarch bleed.
 The beasts superior wisdom saw,
 And fled — or took from him their law.
 For him her lap Pomona spread,
 For him the Vine nectareous bled,
 And Ceres from her copious horn
 Abundant shed the ears of corn.

But man beheld with joyless eye
 The bounties of the earth and sky :

L

For

For that bright spark purloin'd from heaven
 To his internal gaze had given
 The good and ill of his existence,
 In landscapes, placed at proper distance,
 And terminating in the tide
 Down which all mortal beings glide.
 His eye upon the flood he fix'd,
 And not one object saw betwixt.
 His steps, the tide's tremendous roll !
 With deepest anguish fill his soul.

To his relief Prometheus flew,
 And o'er the waves a veil he threw.
 Man look'd around with chearful glance,
 And in a transport seem'd to dance
 Along the sweetly smiling green,
 Where flocks and herds were sporting seen,
 To where the grapes luxurious hung,
 The orange glow'd, and music rung.

But,

But, ere he reach'd the grove, he spy'd
 A landscape on the other side
 All scath'd and barren to the sight,
 Without one flow'ret to delight ;
 But adders fell, and tygers dire,
 And lions fierce, with eyes of fire !
 The tear again gush'd from his eye,
 And down he set himself to sigh.
 The adder's sting, the lion's jaws,
 The pard, the tyger's deathful paws,
 Afflict his soul — and on the wheel
 No wretch can higher torture feel.

“ Another hit,” — Prometheus cried :
 “ I from his view each ill will hide ;
 “ Then he sincerely will enjoy
 “ The present good, without annoy.”

Man now one blooming scene survey'd,
 Where ever-smiling sun-beams play'd,

With here and there a vacant space ;
 But not one object to disgrace
 The prospect fair ; or to the heart
 Convey one agonizing smart.
 The grape already seem'd to bleed,
 And o'er the plain he sprung with speed :
 But soon impatience check'd his breath,
 And down he sunk, at gasp of death.

“ One effort more, and I have done,” —
 The artist cry'd, and hid the sun :
 The sun that beam'd upon the mind,
 Not that which in the sky we find.

A cloud o'ercaст the prospect fair :
 An awful emblem of despair.
 The child of darkness death implored,
 And frantic rose to seize the sword,
 Or whate'er weapon there was found,
 To give himself the mortal wound ;

When

When from the gloom, array'd in light,
 Hope broke, all glorious, to his sight.

“ Forbear, blind man ! — behold a friend ;
 “ I come your footsteps to attend.
 “ The objects in this mirror view,
 “ And you will gladly life pursue.”

He looks, and looks, then anxious burns ;
 When suddenly the glass she turns.
 Again he weeps, bewails his fate,
 And vows that life is all deceit :
 She holds the mirror to his eye ;
 And, hark ! anew his heart beats high.
 Though oft deceived, he still believes ;
 And, stranger still, himself deceives.
 One hour he laughs, another cries ;
 Now is all rapture, now all sighs ;
 But onward still he holds his way,
 Chear'd by the glass and heavenly ray :

Nor

Nor when he sees the awful shore,
 And hears the surge tremendous roar,
 Does he shrink back — but walks sublime
 The wave, and smiles adieu to time !

Hence we perceive, that man may bear,
 Through ignorance, those ills severe,
 Which, if foreseen, would blast each joy,
 And quickly life itself destroy ;
 That death is dreaded more than pain
 And all the complicated train
 Of human woes, yet hope can clear
 The prospect, and the passage cheer ;
 That certain and unmingled good
 Becomes an ill, at distance view'd :
 And hence we learn, “ That *love* not *hate*
 “ Conceals from Man the Book of Fate.”

F A B L E XVI.

The Two Doves.

To a Country Gentleman.

THREE happy swain! if thou hast
found

A gentle maid of love possess'd,
By Hymen let thy vows be crown'd,
And strain her fondly to thy breast.

Let

Let not ambition's empty glare
 From her seduce thy steps aside;
 Let not a face, however fair,
 Allure thee from thy faithful bride:

Nor let that ignis-fatuus fashion,
 Which leads in foreign climes to roam
 The youth of this deluded nation,
 Bewitch thee from thy peaceful home.

What is the world to those who love?
 Its pride, its pomp, its pleasures all?
 Who would the pangs of absence prove
 To share the riches of Bengal?—

True lovers in their passion find
 All that the spacious globe can give;
 United both in heart and mind,
 They in each others beings live.

But

But life itself, we know, may tire;
 And fondest lovers may grow cold.
 A TURTLE pined with vain desire
 To visit other lands, we are told;

Though favour'd with a loving mate,
 And all that such a bird can want.
 What more, in this terrestrial state,
 Can Heaven to any creature grant?

“ What would my love?”—his consort said;

“ Are we not with affection blest?—

“ Have I not due attention paid?—

“ Are not his victuals to his taste?—

“ Wilt thou thy tender partner leave?

“ The sweets of love resign?—ah no!

“ That sympathetic heart would grieve,

“ And ne'er could absence undergo.

“ All day dejected I should mourn,
 “ Each night should steep my couch in tears;
 “ And long, ah! long ere thy return,
 “ Should fall a victim to my fears.

“ But, cruel bird! if I no more
 “ Have in that much loved heart a share;
 “ If I thy absence must deplore,
 “ O grant, at least, one humble prayer!

“ If e’er this bosom was thought white,
 “ If love e’er sparkled in this eye;
 “ If, in the moments of delight,
 “ I ever heaved a mutual sigh,—

“ Stay till the rosy-footed May
 “ And Zephyrs usher in the Spring;
 “ When Phoebus sheds a brighter day,
 “ And birds the air securely wing.

“ What

“ What do I say? — A thousand ills

“ Upon the harmless Turtle wait :

“ What cruel claws, what savage bills,

“ What snares entwisted strong with fate?”

This speech went to the lover's heart :

He fate some moments embarrass'd;

But soon impatience heal'd the smart,

And thus the mourner he address'd:

“ Why is my love to grief a prey?—

“ I only visit France and Spain:

“ Our meeting absence will repay;

“ And soon I will be home again.

“ Who lives in the sequester'd bow'r,

“ However smoothly time may flow,

“ Must oft lament the luckless hour

“ That he neglected birds to know.

“ Few are the pleasures of the plains,

“ The points of conversation few—

“ But foolishly this heart complains,

“ For life with thee is ever new.

“ Yet once indulge me; nor bewail

“ What will, I hope, produce delight:

“ You’ll be enchanted with my tale,

“ And think all happen’d in your fight.”

This said—he sweetly coo’d, “ My dear!”

As fluttering, fluttering, round he flew;

And, while his eye distill’d a tear,

He parted with a fond adieu.

To tell the blasts that he endured,

The cities, palaces, he saw,

Before he was of travelling cured,

Were tedious as a writ of law.

The

The dangers which our Dove assail'd
 Were not less irksome to relate;
 But he o'er all, at last, prevail'd,
 And reach'd the dwelling of his mate.

Yet not without some loss of feather,
 Cuff'd from him by a cruel kite,
 And many marks of wind and weather;
 In short, he was a perfect fright.

'Tis likewise said — I but relate
 The story as to me it came—
 'Tis said, that to his faithful mate
 He bore some secret marks of shame.

Take these with all the aching hearts
 Which he in absence had sustain'd,
 For the improvement of his parts,
 And judge if on the whole he gain'd.

And,

And, ah! far otherwife, I ween,
 It was with the deserted Dove;
 For female bosoms feel more keen
 The sorrows and the joys of love.

With drooping head and flagging wing
 Had she bewail'd her cheerless lot;
 And, though invited by the Spring,
 Would never leave the lonely 'cote.

“ Is my dear bird of roving tired? ”—
 She said, and sunk upon his breast;
 “ If he has found what he desired ”—
 “ O let, my love! that subject rest.”

And let it — but, before I close,
 I'll tell you what I would have said—
 And from my heart the language flows—
 In such a case, to my sweet maid,

“ Not

“ Not for the diamonds of Brazil,

“ Not for the treasures of Peru,

“ Would I the keen emotions feel

“ Of such another sad adieu :

“ Not for the mansions of the sky

“ Would I resign the woods, the groves,

“ Where first Urania met my eye,

“ Attended by the smiling Loves ;

“ Where first her undissembling heart,

“ A present for the powers divine !

“ Believed my tale, devoid of art,

“ And breathed its honest sighs to mine.”

Yet now, alas ! I'm doom'd to weep

The absence of the lovely fair.

Your watch, ye guardian angels ! keep ;

O make her your peculiar care !

O send

O send her safe to these fond arms!—

To these fond arms my love restore;

And I will clasp her spotless charms,

And die—but never leave her more.



F A B L E XVII.

The LYNX and the MOLE.

YE sons of genius ! who despise
 The lot of the laborious swain,
 Bend down a moment from the skies,
 And listen to my faithful strain.



BENEATH the covert of a wood,
 With eyes bright as the orb of day,
 An animal of highest brood,
 A Lynx, lay couching for his prey :

N

A Mole

A Mole within her hill he spied,
Which she, industrious, strove to raise ;

“ Alas, unhappy wretch ! ” — he cried,
And on the creature fix’d his gaze.

“ Sure Jove to thee has been unjust ;

“ Debarr’d the chearful light of heaven !

“ Condemn’d to grovel in the dust ! —

“ He better had no being given.”

“ I owe you thanks,” — the Mole replied,

“ For that compassion which you shew ;

“ But nothing is to me denied

“ That would not be the source of woe.

“ My faculties suit my condition,

“ And that my faculties again ;

“ This bosom never knew ambition,

“ And seldom has experienced pain.

“ I

“ I cannot boast your piercing fight,
 “ Your piercing fight I do not need ;
 “ My labours are not in the light ;
 “ But I have hearing in its stead.

“ I’m warn’d now — for example — hark !
 “ A noise informs me hence to fly.
 “ I seek the regions of the dark,
 “ You on your sight and strength rely.”

She said — and, guided by her ear,
 Into the earth she quickly flung ;
 When quivering came the hunter’s spear,
 And to the heart the Lynx it stung.

Ah ! what avail his piercing eyes ? —
 His paws that from the flint struck fire ?
 A victim to contempt he dies —
 To those keen parts which men admire.

F A B L E XVIII.

The WOODCOCK and the MALLARD.

I Know not which I most detest,
 If here I may apply the phrase,
 The man who is a slave to taste,
 Or him that upon garbage preys.

A want of care about our food,
 At least to have it clean and good,
 However simple in its kind,
 With some attention to the dressing,
 Is to despise Heaven's choicest blessing,
 And consequently is a vice ;
 And that as dangerous oft we find
 As being delicately nice.

AS in a marsh, beside a mill,
 A Woodcock and a Mallard feasted,
 A London eating-house suppose ;
 Where, though each creature had his fill,
 (As every honest cockney knows)
 Not one another's morsel tasted :
 But speech, thank Heaven ! is ever free
 In our blest land of liberty.

“ Good Lard ! ”—the squeamish Woodcock
 said,
 “ To see this Mallard I'm afraid.
 “ O what a beastly appetite !
 “ I vow he's worse than any Kite.
 “ You'd swear, from his voracious maw,
 “ That food before he never saw.
 “ Pray, Mr. Mallard, from the North ? —
 “ I mean, at least, far as the Forth ;
 “ For not a bird of this side Tweed
 “ So greedily, I'm sure, could feed.

“ Snail,

“ Snail, frog, and toad is made your prey;

“ All filth goes down comes in your way.

“ Such want of choice ! — Who can fit by

“ And not be shock'd at gluttony ? ” —

“ A Scot ! — the foul reproach I scorn :

“ No ; in Old England I was born.

“ In plenteous Yorkshire I was bred,

“ And late in Lincoln's fens I fed.

“ You some outlandish bird must be,

“ Or you had ne'er mistaken me :

“ To shun the cold, some Shetland Sawny,

“ Or, faith ! some Nova Zembla zany.

“ Good-lack ! how pretty an accuser ? —

“ I rather should have said abuser ;

“ You, who the richest juices drain,

“ Now of the marsh, the grove, the hill,

“ To blame me for my eating plain ! —

“ You, Sir, who sucking, sucking still,

“ Ne'er from the earth take out your bill,

“ But

“ But when new dainties you would gain,
 “ That you should of my taste complain !

“ Say, trifler, can it be a crime
 “ To eat one’s food in little time ? —
 “ And nearest virtue sure he lives,
 “ Who kindly takes what nature gives.
 “ A glutton is an odious name,
 “ But epicure’s more mark’d with shame.
 “ What language fitly can express
 “ The silly vice of daintiness !” —

- The birds with mutual scorn thus parted,
 Each holding what he had asserted ;
 And consequently each in haste
 To fill his maw, or please his taste :
 The one to feed upon some garbage,
 From neighbouring slaughter-house that fell ;
 The other to some smiling herbage,
 That deckt the bottom of a well ;

Where

Where he might fit and sip the juices
Which nature meant for higher uses.

Attentive only to destroying,
Unmindful of the smell or look,
And quite regardless of enjoying,
The Mallard gorged a fatal hook :

The Woodcock in a net was caught,
Which near his darling spot was placed ;
And by the fowler soon was taught
To mourn his too luxurious taste.



F A B L E XIX.

The HERMIT.

A Pious Hermit from his cell,
 (For in a rock he chose to dwell)
 One morn survey'd the smiling deep,
 When every wave was lull'd asleep,
 And saw the loaded vessels glide
 Securely o'er the peaceful tide;
 While gentle and propitious gales
 Distended wide their shining sails.
 But not alone the distant main,
 But all the vast surrounding plain,
 Unbounded broke upon his sight
 In scenes of beauty and delight.

O

The

The flow'ry mead, the verdant grove,
 That rung with melody and love;
 The peasant whistling at his toil,
 The crop that crown'd the neighbouring soil;
 The lowing Ox, the neighing Steed,
 The flocks that on the mountain feed;
 The shepherd's flute, the artless song
 Of milkmaid, tripping blithe along,
 Conspired the Hermit's soul to raise
 To thought, to musing, and to praise;—
 When lo! a cloud the sky o'ercast,
 And loud was heard the howling blast.
 The forest sunk beneath its sweep,
 And frightful billows swell'd the deep;
 The shatter'd ships were dash'd ashore,
 Or perish'd in the wild uproar:
 The lightning's flash, the thunder's sound,
 Gave horror to the gloom profound;
 And last an earthquake's awful shock
 With trembling fill'd the fixed rock!

In

In crowds the frighten'd peasants ran
 (For well they knew the holy man)
 To find within the Hermit's cave
 A refuge — or at least a grave.
 But what was their surprise and wonder,
 To see him smiling at the thunder!
 His look composed, and brow serene
 Dispell'd the terror of the scene.

“ My honest friends, be not dismay'd,”
 To them, with chearful voice, he said,
 “ To me this elemental strife
 “ Was frightful, at one time of life;
 “ Like you, I was a slave to dread,
 “ Like you, to caves and dens I fled:
 “ But knowledge, like the solar ray,
 “ Drives darkness, doubt, and fear away.
 “ By long and serious contemplation
 “ Upon the wisdom of creation,

“ I can with equal eye behold
 “ Or storm or sunshine, heat or cold—
 “ The breeze that gives the flow’rets birth,
 “ Or that which nips them from the earth;
 “ Pleased, yet resign’d, in ev’ry state,
 “ Convinced that Heaven is *good as great.*”



F A B L E XX.

The STAG at the FOUNTAIN.

TO CELIA.

BLEST with a face, a form to please,
With beauty, elegance, and ease;
With wit, that beauty makes to glow,
As Phoebus gilds the mountain's brow,
Can Celia fail to be adored
By Cit, by Commoner, and Lord?—

But

But lords to flattery are inclined,
 And beauty oft inflames the mind;
 Take then the counsel of a friend,
 Directed by no selfish end.
 Let Celia virtue learn to prize,
 More than the lustre of her eyes;
 More than the glories of her face
 Let her esteem that mental grace.
 For these, alas! must soon decay,
 And these to ruin may betray;
 But that will lead to Hymen's bow'r,
 And crown with peace her latest hour.



A STAG, when he had drank his fill,
 Survey'd his image in the rill—
 The rill, as Celia's mirror bright,
 Shew'd each proportion to his sight.

His

His dappled face he much admired,
 And with his branching horns was fired;
 But, when his legs he came to view,
 Out in a flame his passion flew.
 “ O Heaven ! ” — he cried, — “ and can it be ? —
 “ Gods ! can such legs belong to me ? ”

As this he spoke, he heard the sound
 Of hunters, hounds, and horns around :
 He sprung, like lightning, o’er the plain,
 And left the dogs and all their train.
 Next to the woods he bends his speed,
 By swiftness still from danger freed ;
 When, ah ! his heart-elating horns
 Entangle him in a bush of thorns.
 The blood-hounds staunch his footsteps follow,
 And o’er their prey the hunters hollow.

In death, if we may credit fame,
 The Stag was heard thus to exclaim :

“ Mistaken

“ Mistaken beast! too late I find,
“ That what displeased my foolish mind
“ Was given to save me from undoing,
“ And what I prized to prove my ruin.”



F A B L E XXI.

The OAK and the SHADOW.

EACH man below deceives himself,
 From love of pleasure, or of pelf :
 As many fools run after shadows,
 As boys chase butterflies in meadows.
 To a mistaken tree I'll send them ;
 It may amuse, if not — amend them.



UPON a river's verdant side
 An Oak in rural beauty grew ;
 He saw his honours in the tide,
 And was enamour'd at the view.

He left the shore, and sought the flood,
 In quest of the delusive good ;

P

When,

When, lo ! a storm the water tofs'd,
And all his flow'ry hopes were lost.

The bank with toil and trouble gain'd,
He found, alas ! too late,
No Shadow, e'en to cheat, remain'd,
And fled his former state.



F A B L E XXII.

The SWORD and the PLOUGHSHARE.

A Sword and 'Share (a peer and swain)
 One day encounter'd on the plain.
 The honest 'Share address'd the Sword
 As other yeomen do a lord :
 But he, wrapt up in vain nobility,
 Had lost the sense of all civility ;
 And therefore pass'd, with haughty mien,
 As he had neither heard nor seen.

“ Whence this contempt ? ”—cried conscious
 worth ?

“ Dost thou not know ?—Review thy birth !

“ Art thou not of plebeian race,
 “ While I from kings my lineage trace ? ” —

“ It is not whence — but what we are,
 “ I own myself a humble 'Share ;
 “ Yet mankind owe to my rough toil
 “ The richest produce of the soil.
 “ Much harm you've done the world, I know ;
 “ But sent you e'er a blessing ? — No.”

“ Thou groveling soul, contracted spirit !
 “ Darest thou pretend to judge of merit ? —
 “ Such cares for slaves may be design'd,
 “ But enter not the noble mind.”

“ Yes ! heroes recent from command
 “ Have seized the plough with conquering hand.
 “ The Romans I need only name
 “ To stain your cheek with deepest shame.”

“ Without

“ Without my aid, what had they done? —

“ Had they the universe o’er-run? —

“ A village Rome, and village swains

“ The chiefs who led the world in chains.”

“ And happier they, and happier earth,

“ Had such ambition ne’er had birth.

“ See Europe, Africa in arms,

“ And Asia shook with dire alarms,

“ To gratify the lawless will

“ Of men who had a lust to kill ;

“ And who on all, both friends and foes,

“ Pretended slavery to impose.

“ Say, hence what good to man could flow?]

“ Or was it not the source of woe?” —

“ The Sword, like modern buck confuted,

No more attempted to dispute it ;

But told the 'Share there was a way

To know who had best temper'd clay—

“ I,

“ I, Sir! will even condescend.

“ To overlook your humble birth;

“ And from my dignity descend,

“ To combat with a son of earth.

“ Prepare! yourself then to defend.

“ Be cool, my Lord — I will not trust

“ My honour to a random thrust.

“ Fools, rousing at each slight offence,

“ Fly in the face of Providence;

“ But sober minds in just resistance

“ Alone will hazard an existence.

“ Reason, our glory and our pride,

“ In every dispute should decide.

“ Here comes the Mole; let us agree

“ To yield to her the cause of plea.

“ As Justice blind, as Minos grave,

“ A fitter judge we cannot have.”

Before

Before the bench both claims were laid,
 And each had due attention paid ;
 When, after sitting some time mute,
 Her worship ended thus the dispute ;

- “ The Sword first arm’d the ruffian’s hand ;
 “ And still he loves the bloody band.
 “ He, who to violence owes his birth,
 “ Has little chance to bless the earth ;
 “ And never can those ills repair
 “ Which his forefathers did the ’Share.
 “ If he in Justice’ train is found,
 “ ’Tis only to inflict her wound.
 “ He therefore to the ’Share must yield,
 “ The native sov’reign of the field.”



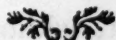
F A B L E XXIII.

The Fox and the Lion.

TWIXT man and man, the strongest
 tie
 Is doubtless plain sincerity ;
 But, in the commerce of mankind,
 The honest heart will often find
 It prudent to conceal the face
 Of truth — if not bestow a grace :
 And some have thought all truths severe,
 Unless disclosed ourselves to clear,
 Howe'er the breast may seem to glow,
 More surly pride than virtue shew.

That

That they displease, we hourly see;
 Nay, make a friend an enemy.
 Self-love 'gainst self-love flies to arms,
 And every conscious spark alarms.
 Those who from pow'r indulgence want
 Must not assume the Stoic's rant.



A FOX, pursued by dogs and men,
 Took shelter in a Lion's den.
 When danger close behind us presses
 We see not what's before our faces.
 Though there secure from native foes,
 Poor Reynard had but small repose:
 On pity he durst not rely,
 And less on hospitality.

“ The Gods are kind ! ” — the Lion cried,
 “ Who bounteously for me provide.

Q

“ What

“ What fauce, Sir Reynard, suits thee best?—

“ For I intend to have a feast.”

“ Your taste, great monarch! must decide

“ In that, as in all things beside;

“ Should one of my inferior birth

“ Direct the sovereign of the earth?”—

Said Reynard— “ But, without offence,

“ Might I a simple truth advance,

“ Might I compare great things with small,

“ Those words so sharp, those eyes of fire

“ Remind me of my hapless fire:

“ Alas! I yet lament his fall.

“ A helpless rabbit sought his roof;

“ But he, 'gainst generous pity proof,

“ Forgot all hospitable laws,

“ And made it bleed beneath his jaws.

“ The guiltless rabbit's dying cries

“ Call'd righteous justice from the skies:

“ The

“ The thunder roll’d,—and to the earth
 “ It struck the author of my birth.”

With shame, fear, and confusion stung,
 His head the haughty Lion hung:
 “ Begone! you trifler, with your tale,”
 He cried—“ You’ve made me lose my meal.”



F A B L E XXIV.

The MAN and the MERMAID.

A Rake, with Venus in disgrace,
One morn thus felt for human race:

“ Poor mortals!—your gay hours but smile,

“ Like some fair trait’ress, to beguile.

“ The sons of Hope and of Desire,

“ You after distant good aspire;

“ Attain it:—will you find relief?—

“ No—it will only fix your grief.

“ Fond Hope may tell you, that To-morrow

“ Will bring you joy, and chase your sorrow;

“ But trust not her coquettish lear:

“ When you approach, she’ll frown severe.

“ What

" What we desire, imagination
 " Paints lovely to the inclination;
 " But, that possess'd, the sponge she takes,
 " And every charm the eye forsakes;
 " While, foul and hateful to the sight,
 " A shapeless monster springs to light!"—
 And his complaint perhaps is true
 Of such as wanton love pursue.



UPON a rock, near that famed isle,
 Where Venus taught the waves to smile,
 A graceful Mermaid often view'd
 Her image in the glassy flood;
 And there a youth devoutly came,
 And to the beauty breathed his flame.
 He praised her shape, he praised her air,
 He swore she was divinely fair—
 Her voice could smoothe the stormy deep,
 And charm the boisterous winds asleep!—

Would

Would she but grant him one sweet kiss,
He would despise immortal bliss;
But should she — O it was too high!
He doubtless should of rapture die.

She smiled consent; and in the tide
The lover plunged, elate with pride:
She met him ere he reach'd the land,
And took him fondly by the hand.
What follow'd I must not express;
But every simple maid can guess.
Let it suffice, they went to bed;
Though I pretend not they were wed;
And the first gleam of morning light
Chased all the transports of the night.

“ What,” cried the youth, “ have I
embraced?—

“ A woman *merely*—to the waist;

“ Below,

- “ Below, a hideous fish’s tail,
 “ Encrusted with a horrid scale!—
 “ O Love! thy blindness who can see
 “ Till once enjoyment set them free?”



F A B L E XXV.

The TWO TRAVELLERS and the
O Y S T E R.

YE men of a contentious spirit,
To you the following tale I write;
Which, duly weigh'd, the harpy-race,
That now our courts of law disgrace,
Might turn their heads to honest ends,
To useful purposes their hands:
For all the noisy bar will flee,
If they reflect upon the fee.

ONE

ONE day, (to name the place and time
 Would be *mal a propos* in rhyme)
 Two hungry Travellers on their road
 An Oyfter found—each blest his God,
 With solemn phrafe his right contested,
 And vow'd it was in him invested.
 While they litigiously contended,
 Came Justice, with her scales suspended.
 “ Sure wisdom dwells in such a face!”—
 To her they both refer their case.

The cause of dispute Justice weighs,
 Demands the Oyfter for her fees,
 And opes, and sucks it in their sight;
 Then, as befits vexatious wight,
 And as authentic records tell,
 She to each claimant gave a shell.
 Now, with the look of moderna lawyer,
 When he has fleeced a thoughtless heir,

R

She

She said, “ Did fools not thus debate,
“ I should enjoy my ease and state.
“ Adieu—be friends—the Oyfter’s good.”
They acquiesced—and humbly bow’d.



F A B L E XXVI.

The GODS of EGYPT.

IN Egypt, famed for arts and laws,
 And whence her lineage Science draws;
 In Egypt, tho' it now found odd,
 If we believe historic fame,
 Each brute, each reptile, was a god,
 And vegetables shared the name.

To-day the altar of the Cat
 Smoked with a plump and stately Rat;
 To-morrow the almighty vermin
 Beheld the Cat come clothed in ermin

A victim to his awful shrine,
 By priests and princes held divine.
 The incense flamed, and music's sound
 Was heard through all the sacred round ;
 Strophe, antistrophe, and epode flew
 To heaven in measures wild and new,
 And cleft the sky with mystic meaning,
 And phrases of cœlestial gleanings.
 What farmer durst of Rats complain ? —
 He begg'd them to accept his grain.

On such a day a devotee,
 Some mad enthusiast he must be,
 Thus pray'd : “ Thou Being best adored !
 “ Shall I for thee unsheath the sword ? —
 “ For thee in holy broils engage,
 “ And vent on impious Cats my rage ? —

“ The Rat a God !” Pufs made reply ;
 “ What then, blind worshipper, am I ? —

“ I,

- “ I, who at different times have dined
 “ Upon a hundred of his kind ? —
 “ But yesterday the altar smoked
 “ For me — the Rat is now invoked ! —
 “ A God to-day, a wretch to-morrow,
 “ He will bewail his case with sorrow.”

Grimalkin's speech is somewhat dark,
 But I will try to hit the mark :

- “ The world is Egypt, and each man
 “ Is blind as an Egyptian.
 “ Our passions are our gods : — to them
 “ We sacrifice our health, our fame ;
 “ And they, as lust or avarice burns,
 “ Are gods and victims, in their turns.”

Or if another moral's wanting,
 Another moral is at hand ;
 For fable-making is like canting —
 And preachers ne'er are at a stand.

“ Since

“ Since thus, to all that’s mean or base,
“ To brutes, to reptiles, man has bow’d ;
“ Unless he glories in disgrace,
“ Can he of *reason* still be proud ?”



F A B L E XXVII.

The INCONSIDERATE REVENGE.

THE Horfe, when human life began,
 Was not, as now, the flave of Man :
 But Men, with Horfes, roved the wood,
 And nuts and acorns were their food.
 Then, by the Bear one day insulted,
 The Horfe his neighbour, Man, consulted,
 How he revenge might beft obtain,
 And unmolefted fcour the plain.

“ Let me,” — faid Man, — “ afcend your
 back,
 “ And I the favage will attack.”

To this the honeft Horfe agreed,
 And to the combat rufh’d with fpeed ;
 Where Man, with lufty oaken fpear,
 Laid fpawling at his feet the Bear.

The

The Horfe with grateful friendship burn'd,
And Man a thousand thanks return'd.

“ Adieu, my generous friend !”—he said ;
“ You always may command my aid.”

“ Then,” — answer'd Man, — “ you must
not go ;

“ For I have now a subtle foe :

“ The Stag oft robs me of my food,

“ And yet my vengeance can elude.”

“ I'm happy,” — said the Horfe, — “ that I
“ Can serve so faithful an ally.”

The Stag appear'd—uncurb'd by rein,
The Horfe distended every vein.
Like thunder through the wood he hies,
Light lightning up the hill he flies ;

Then

Then swiftly down the steep he flings,
And o'er the plain exulting springs.
At last, deprived of strength and breath,
The Stag a victim fell to death.

“ Now,” — said the Horse, with throbbing
heart,—

“ I to my pastures may depart.”

“ No,” — answer'd Man, — “ I know your
merit

“ Too well to flight that noble spirit :

“ I'll shield you from the common air,

“ And all my pleasures you shall share.”

Ah ! what is pleasure without thee,
Thou first of blessings ! Liberty ? —
The Horse at length his folly saw ;
But then the bit was in his jaw :

He therefore patiently submitted,
 And faithfully himself acquitted.
 Yet often his capricious lord,
 Like other tyrants, broke his word —
 With whip and spur his body tore,
 And drench'd his gallant sides in gore.
 Now for his pride, now for his pleasure,
 He strain'd the courser beyond measure;
 And, when oppress'd with toil and age,
 He turn'd him to the winter's rage;
 To pine beneath th' inclement sky —
 In want and misery to die ! —
 When this the noble creature found,
 He look'd with mournful eyes around,
 And said, " Let never beast resign
 " His rights for blood, as I have mine."



F A B L E XXVIII.

The CHOICE of PALLAS.

THE goddesses of old loved trees,
 As much as men our modern ladies :
 Some chose the handsome, some the strong,
 The lusty some, and some the long.
 But one had wisdom to despise
 Th' accomplishments of shape and size,
 And on the fruit her choice repose ;
 Which from the heart, like virtue, flows.

The prettiest spark in all the grove,
 The Myrtle, caught fair Venus' love.

With him she chose to take the air,
 With him the sweets of morn to share ;
 With him, at noon, by fountains bright
 To taste the raptures of delight ;
 And, when the evening hours came on,
 She chose to lie with him alone.

The Pine upon the mountain's brow
 Of Cybele inclined the vow.
 His shoulders broad, and brawny arms,
 Procured at once the matron's charms :
 And, lock'd in his embraces fast,
 She braves the winter's furious blast,
 And scorns the thunder's awful sound,
 And lightnings dread that flash around !

Minerva, ever prudent maid,
 Attention to the Olive paid.
 Securely seated in the vale,
 She saw him gods and men regale ;

And,

And, though not of luxurious taste,
 She chose beneath his shade to rest.
 Improved by her sagacious toil,
 The Olive honour'd more the soil;
 And habit and esteem conspired
 To make her love what she admired.

One day, in social chat with Jove,
 This goddess ask'd his thoughts of love;
 And how her sisters came to scorn
 Those trees which fairest fruits adorn,
 While they admired — what strange abuse!
 Such trees as are of little use.

“ That is,” said Jove, “ the noblest passion
 “ Which most deserves our approbation,
 “ When reason has survey'd the whole,
 “ And traced the motives of the soul;
 “ Where gross affections least have mix'd,
 “ And where the heart on worth is fix'd.

“ Your

“ Your sisters doubtless will proclaim
 “ That sacred love was all their aim ;
 “ And you, my daughter, will accuse
 “ Of mean and interested views :
 “ But I suspect their passion holy
 “ Is tinged deep with amorous folly.”

“ They may from noon to night declaim,”—
 Said Pallas, — “ I am none of those
 “ Who blush without a cause of shame :
 “ My Olive for his fruit I chose —
 “ Not for his colour, shape, or stature ;
 “ For any grace, or any feature —
 “ I scorn your bullies and your beaux.”

Bacchus stood list'ning by the while,
 And added slyly, with a smile :

“ Right, Pallas, right ! — and for her wine
 “ I singled out the generous Vine.
 “ Phœbus

- “ Phœbus may with the Laurel flaunt,
“ I something more essential want.
“ Those who our passion disapprove
“ May try if they can live on love.”



F A B L E XXIX.

The OAK and the REED.

THE Oak, one day, said to the Reed,
 “ Your lot is pitiful indeed.
 “ A breeze to you a tempest seems.
 “ If Zephyrus only crisp the streams,
 “ You are obliged to bend your head;
 “ While I my front rear without dread
 “ Upon the lofty mountain’s brow,
 “ Nor to the rage of Boreas bow.
 “ The rising sun my state surveys,
 “ And I arrest his setting rays.
 “ You in a tempest oft are toss’d,
 “ When I feel but a gale, at most.
 “ Would you take shelter in the shade
 “ With which I shield the neighbouring glade,
 “ I would

“ I would protect you from the ire
 “ Of all the storms, should they conspire.
 “ But you, alas ! are often found
 “ Upon some common’s marshy bound,
 “ Exposed to every boisterous wind :
 “ Sure Nature is to thee unkind.”

The Reed reply’d, “ So much compassion
 “ Displays a generous disposition ;
 “ But cease thy care :—the winds to me
 “ Are less alarming than to thee.
 “ At their approach I quickly bend,
 “ Nor ever with their rage contend.
 “ Thou hast till now their force withstood,
 “ And ne’er that princely back hast bow’d ;
 “ But mark the end.”——As this he said,
 A gathering tempest he survey’d :
 The eldest offspring of the North
 Rush’d in his iron chariot forth.

The stout Oak stood, the weak Reed bended;
 The furious Wind his efforts mended;
 And on the Tree so fiercely fell,
 That he, whose head in heaven was lost,
 Whose feet extended low as hell,
 Was from his seat imperial toft.



F A B L E X X X .

The DELICATE SPARROW.

To a Gentleman of too refined Sensibility.

THERE is a kind of delicacy,
 But surely of a bastard line,
 That one while is so proud and faucy
 Chastisement sharp it ought to meet;
 At other times it is so sweet,
 So modest, so alive to shame,
 That at a look it seems to pine,
 And pity more deserves than blame.

By such a temper Crito mourns
 Amid the chearful walks of men,
 Like wretch upon a bed of thorns,
 Or Daniel in the lion's den.

Why will my friend still scrutinize,
 With such keen circumspective eyes,
 The motive of each human action?—
 “ Truth is so high a satisfaction.”
 Nay, Crito, then why trust your sword
 Upon the honest maker's word?—
 Your breast would prove the temper sound :
 You could but bleed—and truth were found.
 By one such bold experiment,
 What miseries might you not prevent!

Loved for yourself? — blest whim indeed!
 So wild a fancy can you feed?—
 But tell me pray, what is this self
 Adored by every peevish elf?—

Is it your person, fortune, face,
 Or your proud mind's internal grace?—
 Is it with one of these, or all,
 That your fair nymph in love must fall?—

“ With neither, Sir.”

So I suspected;
 And your dear self must be neglected,
 Till you a miracle can find—
 A woman without eyes or mind;
 A bosom void of all desire,
 A heart that *nothing* can admire.



WHEN Spring returning chear'd the plain,
 And tender passions fill'd the grove,
 A Sparrow felt in every vein
 The powerful sympathy of love,

Of

Oft he employ'd the liquid glass,
 In which wing'd beaux themselves admire;
 And oft approach'd his favourite lass
 With pinions quivering with desire.

Alas! in vain — the cruel fair
 For him had neither ears nor eyes:
 His sighs are idly spent in air,
 In vain his vows ascend the skies.

Whether this coldness was sincere,
 Or but th' effect of maiden shame;
 Or if some bird, to her more dear,
 Had in her bosom raised a flame,

Were hard to tell: — though 'tis suspected,
 It from indifference flow'd alone;
 As she was plain and unaffected,
 And yet had no attachment shewn.

But

But slightest things the heart can sway;
 A sleeker feather, brighter eye:
 And sober bosoms oft obey
 The prudent call, conveniency.

One day, as sitting in the nest,
 Which for his darling was prepared,
 The Sparrow strove to soothe his breast
 With sentiments of soft regard.

“ If I possess’d the Linnet’s note,
 “ If with the Goldfinch I could vie,
 “ I should not need to wail my lot,
 “ Not thus neglected should I sigh.

“ Ungenerous bird! though I could boast
 “ The richest feathers of our race,—
 “ The sweetest notes on me were lost,
 “ If they procured not thy embrace.”

While

While warmly thus his heart o'erflow'd,
 He view'd the cause of all his pain—
 The bird for whom his bosom glow'd
 Exposed to an inclement rain.

“ This is the season,”—whisper'd Love,—
 “ The brightness of your flame to shew :
 “ Adversity a friend must prove,
 “ And then a lover best we know.”

But Delicacy interposed,
 With doubts and scruples fine and nice;
 And soon the squeamish Sparrow closed
 With her fantastical advice.

“ The cold perhaps might now incline
 “ Her heart,”— he said,—“ to my desires;
 “ But ne'er could light that spark divine,
 “ Which native tenderness inspires.

“ Ah!

“ Ah! what avails the sweetest air,

“ The finest shape, the brightest eye!

“ Who these — the bosom who would share,

“ If he possession there must buy?—

“ Souls, like the loadstone and the steel,

“ When touch'd with love, for union pant,

“ From that soft sympathy they feel,

“ Unbiafs'd by a wish or want.”

While thus he mus'd, the bird beloved

Had almost perish'd in the cold;

Much at his conduct she was moved,

And scarce from weeping could withhold.

“ How empty are,”—she said,—“ the sighs

“ Of lovers in the sunshine hour!—

“ My faithless Sparrow now denies

“ That kindness which is in his pow'r.

- “ If I seem’d cool to his addressees,
 “ I ne’er repaid his love with scorn :
 “ She who the truth too soon confesses,
 “ Alas ! is often left forlorn.”

As thus she mourn’d, a hawk appear’d,
 And quickly seiz’d his trembling prey ;
 Her dying cries the lover heard,
 And fainted at the sound away.

- “ Wretch that I am !”—he said,—“ to see
 “ All that my longing soul desired
 “ Exposed to ruin—and by me !
 “ I better had with her expired.

- “ Few are the pleasures life contains ;
 “ These few false delicacy kills :
 “ What wonder then our race complains
 “ Of disappointments and of ills !”

F A B L E XXXI.

INDUSTRY *and* SLOTH.

To a person of an indolent disposition.

TO-morrow, Clodio, still you say
 You'll act—but when arrives that day?—
 How distant is't? or, in the round
 Of this wide globe, where to be found? —
 In what dark corner does it lurk? —
 Dwells't with the Tartar, or the Turk? —
 What can recall, or what repay,
 The years which you have thrown away?

To-morrow has consumed the age
 Of Priam, or the Pylean sage.
 To-morrow ! — dread the pow'r of fate :
 To-day, believe me, is too late ;
 He, he alone deserves the name
 Of WISE, who yesterday can claim.

To wake you from this dreaming state,
 A faithful story I'll relate ;
 A conversation with a friend,
 Who lived, like you, to little end.



‘ WHY lies my friend so long in bed ? —
 ‘ One might suppose you lately wed.
 ‘ The chaste endearments of a wife
 ‘ Were some excuse for such a life.’

‘ Wife !’

‘ Wife ! ’ — said the wag — ‘ faith, I have
none ;

‘ But two fair mistresses I own.

‘ You must have heard the names of both :

‘ The noted Industry and Sloth.

‘ By these each morning I am plied

‘ With blandishments, from every side.

‘ One says, “ Arise ! the morning’s fair ;

— “ Come, taste with me the fragrant air :

“ With me ascend the mountain’s brow,

“ And pay to Health your chearful vow ;

“ Or — hark ! — I hear the distant horn,

“ Come, rouse with me the slumbering morn,

“ Already Phœbus sheds the day ;

“ My jolly hunter, haste away !

— “ O’er hedge and ditch, swift let us fly ;

“ Ere we approach, the chace may die.

“ But

“ But why in vulgar toils engage ? —
 “ Shine forth the glory of the age.
 “ ’Twas I gave Tully’s words their glow,
 “ And Mansfield stole from me the flow
 “ That glides from his harmonious tongue :
 “ Though deep, not rapid ; smooth, yet
 strong.
 “ Set these bright names before your eyes,
 “ Like them in fearless virtue rise,
 “ Assert the rights of humankind,
 “ And triumph in the fields of mind.
 “ Arise ! while thus supinely laid,
 “ Your weeping country wants your aid.”

‘ The other says, “ Dear youth ! lie still ;
 “ Why should you idly climb the hill ? —
 “ Why spend your strength in useless toils ? —
 “ Why vex your mind with public broils ? —
 “ Sweet is to some the breath of morn,
 “ To some, the music of the horn ;
 “ The

“ The noisy senate some may please —
 “ But you, my love ! were form'd for ease.
 “ Sweeter upon this downy bed,
 “ Half-slumbering, to recline your head,
 “ And cheat the lazy, lagging hours,
 “ While Sloth the fuming coffee pours ;
 “ Or woos you to luxurious rest
 “ Upon her soft, voluptuous breast,
 “ Than all the pleasures action yields
 — “ In camps, in senates, courts, or fields.
 “ Come then, dear youth ! to my embrace ;
 “ Let fools pursue life's toilsome chace.”

‘ Thus they engage my list'ning ear,
 ‘ Till I the bell for dinner hear ;
 ‘ Then up I rise, with rapid haste : —
 ‘ And every morning thus I waste.’

‘ And thus the half of mankind dose,
 ‘ My friend, 'twixt action and repose :

‘ Still

- Still something is, still to be done ;
- Still is, and never is begun ;
- Till Death rings his loud dinner-bell,
- And wakes them with the awful knell.'



F A B L E XXXII.

IMPUDENCE *and* MODESTY.

To a Gentleman just come from the University.

A LAS, my friend! that modest mien,
That look, where every doubt is seen,
In Virtue's eye may merit praise,
But never will your fortune raise.

The honest blush, that comes and goes,
Such is the blindness of mankind,
Will be accounted guilt by those
Who know not that ingenuous mind;

And every mark of diffidence
(A truth which you will dearly buy,
Unless that forehead learn to lie)
Will be set down to want of sense.

The source of these mistakes to trace
 Philosophers had tried in vain—
 Had fought among the human race,
 Had fought upon th' etherial plain :

How oft we blame th' immortal pow'rs
 For blunders which alone are ours !

At last, in Hume's sagacious ear,
 The soul of Plato pour'd a tale,
 Methinks the voice divine I hear !
 Which seems the mystery to unveil.



WHEN Wisdom first appear'd in heaven,
 Two female friends to him were given ;
 Fair Virtue, child of Innocence,
 And her bold sister, Confidence.

By

By like appointment, Folly's train
 (Folly now so pert and vain)
 Were Vice, a romp who shared his ear,
 And Diffidence, the child of Fear.
 Thus were they fitly match'd above,
 And thus were sent to earth by Jove :
 Firm Confidence by Virtue's side,
 And Vice with Diffidence ally'd.
 But dearest friends may turn to foes :
 'Twixt them dissention soon arose.

Wisdom, who led one pair the way,
 Was much accusom'd to delay ;
 With care examined every road,
 However oft it had been trod,
 And every light obstruction weigh'd,
 Before one foot he would proceed.
 What time by Wisdom thus was spent
 To Confidence gave discontent.

By nature fearless, void of forethought,
 She held his scruples all at naught ;
 And always was inclined to bound
 Along the first rough road she found.
 Wisdom and Virtue never parted,
 But were by Confidence deserted.
 Following her forward heart, one morn,
 She left her doubting friends with scorn ;
 And, pleased to trip so fast before,
 She vow'd she ne'er would join them more.

A like event befel the pair
 Who were assign'd to Folly's care.
 As Folly saw but little way,
 He nothing of the roads could say ;
 He took the ford just as he found it,
 Or stood with doubt and fear confounded.
 This wavering temper of his breast
 By Diffidence was much increased ;

Who

Who still was starting terrors new,
 And holding dangers to his view:
 And hence their journey was delay'd,
 And Vice in her career was stay'd.
 She therefore, — as a wanton horse,
 When interrupted in his course,
 His rider throws, and to the goal
 Impetuous springs without control,—
 Her sister rudely beat aside;
 And Folly took her for his guide.

Thus Diffidence, of friends bereft,
 And Confidence hers having left,
 As chance directed, wildly stray'd,
 Till both one village spire survey'd.
 There Wealth had chose his sumptuous seat,
 And Poverty her plain retreat.

Up Confidence went to the hall,
 And entered without knock or call;

Where

Where she found Vice and Folly quaffing
 The Vine's luxurious juice, and laughing.
 Self-introduced, she join'd the train;
 And much their landlord loved her vein.
 She soon familiar grew with Folly,
 And Vice and she were wonderous jolly.
 They have, since that convivial hour,
 Been friends, and guests of Wealth and Pow'r.

Poor Diffidence was struck with awe,
 When she the lordly mansion saw;
 She turned aside her bashful eye,
 And sought the hut of Poverty.
 Invited there, upon the ground,
 Wisdom and Virtue stretch'd, she found;
 Who, sternly push'd from Wealth's wide door,
 With pleasure press'd the cottage floor.
 Virtue had pity on her youth;
 And Wisdom, from her love of truth,

Perceived

Perceived his words she would retain :
 So she was shelter'd in their train.
 By their instructions she improved,
 And soon by both was much beloved ;
 More sweet, more polish'd she became,
 And got of MODESTY the name.

Bad company we always find,
 Ev'n more than good, affects the mind :
 So Confidence, tho' to example
 So much averſe, made progreſs ample
 In all the freaks that Folly knows,
 And the verniſh Vice beſtows ;
 And, from her proneneſs to offence,
 Obtain'd the name of IMPUDENCE.

Mankind, who theſe ſocieties view'd,
 As Jove pronounced their union good,
 And nothing know of their deſertions,
 Their after-likings and averſions,—

Where-

Wherever Impudence they spy,
 Wisdom suppose and Virtue nigh;
 And, where'er Modesty they find,
 Think Vice and Folly lurk behind.



F A B L E XXXIII.

The CAUSE of INFIDELITY.

MUCH clamour has been made of late
About the breach of marriage vows ;
The shameless conduct of the great
Has been the talk of every house.

But little do these meddlers know
The source of all this disagreement ;
What ought to fill their hearts with woe
To them is cause of merriment.



THE human race at first were ONE ;
That is to say, both man and woman :
They no existence had alone,
But every thing possess'd in common.

Y

And

And all the parts were doubtless fitted
 According to the nicest taste ;
 Since, tho' their mates they never quitted,
 They still harmoniously embraced.

But these men-women proud became,
 And paid no reverence to the gods ;
 For which they were disjoin'd with shame,
 And doom'd to wander different roads.

The sympathy of sex was strong ;
 The separate parts for union panted :
 But still, alas ! the choice was wrong,
 When their supremest wish was granted.

Jove had compassion on the race,
 And Love and Hymen sent from heaven :
 Love had command the halves to trace,
 And Hymen power to piece them given.

They

They found mankind so well disposed
 To join their fractured forms again,
 That when they met the seam was closed ;
 And Hymen's task was almost vain.

Then happy mortals spent their lives
 In chaste delights that knew no measure ;
 They found a mistress in their wives,
 And every woman was a treasure.

But Hymen jealous grew of Love,
 And swore his sway that he would share ;
 And, that his threatenings he might prove,
 He made a counsellor of Care.

Hence jointure-deeds, and pin-money,
 And separations had their birth ;
 And hence the sacred nuptial tie
 Became the laughter of the earth.

For

For Love grew jealous in his turn,
 And call'd in Pleasure to his aid ;
 And hence the lawless flames that burn,
 And hence the midnight masquerade.

No sooner Hymen joins two hands,
 Spite of his crafty colleague's arts,
 Than Pleasure creeps between the bars,
 And Love proposes other hearts.

Till Love and Hymen can agree,
 Our slippery age will still grow worse ;
 For one false step there will be three ;
 Divorce will rise upon divorce.

E I N I S

